

Pastor," a mentor, and a friend to all. His ready demeanor makes him readily available to pastors for counseling and friendship. He is often called upon for advice by struggling congregations and has more than once been called upon to present leadership training to churches and deacons.

Rev. Wright is married to Narcissus Hargrove Wright of Henderson, North Carolina and the proud father of four children: Billy, Wendi, Nicole and Ashley. The Wrights presently make their home in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend William F. Wright, Jr. has used his position as a spiritual and community leader to improve the lives of those around him, and his 25th Pastoral Anniversary is yet another reminder of all of the good work he has accomplished. As such, he is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today. Thus, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable person.

HONORING PALMYRA MACEDON  
BOYS' BASKETBALL CLASS B  
STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

**HON. JAMES T. WALSH**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to the Palmyra Macedon Red Raiders, the varsity boys' basketball team that won their first Class B State Title. The 57-47 victory was well earned after trailing to the Carle Place Frogs for the majority of the game.

Junior shooting guard Anthony Hall scored a game-high 26 points, and helped the Red Raiders get back into the lead in the final quarter. Coach Chip Tatro and the rest of this outstanding team deserve congratulations after their third attempt, and consequent victory, in winning the championship.

Coach Chip Tatro, Christopher Milke, Jared Boisvert, Mike Beck, Anthony Hall, Todd Piccola, Dan Gorman, Tim Patchett, Jonathon Denniston, Adam Husk, Andy Weaver, Jason Clair, Sean McGinn, Chris Timbs are all equal contributors to the outstanding 2005 season.

I commend the Palmyra Macedon Red Raiders for their enthusiasm and hard work in reaching their goal. Congratulations and good luck on future seasons.

HONORING THE VAN VANDALS

**HON. JEB HENSARLING**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the Van Vandals boys' basketball team who won the Texas 3A championship on March 11, 2005. In their first trip to the state finals in sixty-three years, the Vandals beat Graham High School to return home with the state championship trophy. This is an accomplishment that the young men on the team will remember for the rest of their lives. As the congressional representative of the members, coaches, and supporters of the Van Vandals, it is my pleasure to recognize their outstanding accomplishment today on the floor

of the United States House of Representatives.

SUN CHRONICLE HAILS APPOINTMENT OF ATTLEBORO NATIVE

**HON. BARNEY FRANK**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, since 1982, my Congressional activities have been covered by the Sun Chronicle, which provides news for the Greater Attleboro, Massachusetts area. It is a newspaper which understands the importance of solid and thoughtful coverage of events that happen within its area. At the same time, it pays due attention to national issues, and it has also been an important advocate for fair treatment for that part of Massachusetts in which it circulates.

Its interest in all three of these elements came together on March 18 when the Sun Chronicle published a gracious and thoughtful editorial about the appointment of an Attleboro native, Joe Solmonese, to be the head of the Human Rights Campaign. The Human Rights Campaign is a major voice for fair treatment for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, and I am among those who was very pleased that Mr. Solmonese was selected, given the combination of skill and talent that he brings to the job.

As the Sun Chronicle noted, "Attleboro is honored by the appointment of a city native to head the Human Rights Campaign" and it is also honored and fortunate to have a newspaper with the generosity of spirit to editorialize as well as it did on this subject. I ask that this editorial be printed here.

[From the Sun Chronicle, March 18, 2005]

ACTIVIST EYES TOUGH FIGHT

(By David Crary)

NEW YORK.—After 12 years advocating for abortion rights, Attleboro native Joe Solmonese might have opted for a less divisive field of work. Instead, he is taking over leadership of the largest national gay-rights group at a time when the same-sex marriage debate rivals abortion for volatility and virulence.

"My challenge is to talk about why the equality we seek is not just important to our community, but should be important to everyone," Solmonese said. "I have to believe in the optimism and fair-mindedness of the American people."

Solmonese was named last week as the new president of the Washington-based Human Rights Campaign and will formally assume the post April 11.

He plans to start his tenure by traveling around the country, meeting with state and local activists.

Since 1993, Solmonese has been a strategist for EMILY's List, a political action committee supporting state and federal candidacies of Democratic women who favor abortion rights. He was its chief executive for the past 2½ years, helping break fundraising records but also seeing candidates his group endorsed lose 2004 Senate races in Florida, South Carolina and Missouri.

Solmonese, 40, graduated from Boston University with a degree in communications after growing up in Attleboro. One of his role models was the local congressman, BARNEY FRANK—who disclosed his homosexuality in 1987 when openly gay politicians were almost unheard of.

"Barney Frank is an incredibly heroic person, but also someone who is absolutely in touch with his constituency," Solmonese said in a telephone interview. "He's a man who values family more than anyone I know."

Solmonese came out as gay in his early 20s; he recalls attending a Human Rights Campaign dinner when he was 22. Before joining EMILY's List, he was an aide to former Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis and a fund-raiser for Frank.

He credits his parents, both school-teachers, with inspiring him to pursue a career of political activism. Solmonese Elementary School in Norton is named after his father, Joseph.

"After a decade in the reproductive rights movement, I see myself having been in the fight for a progressive America," he said. "Groups like the HRC are very much at the forefront of that fight."

Another common denominator for the abortion-rights and gay rights movements is their determined and politically well-connected opposition. Conservative leaders who focus on those two issues have claimed credit for the Republicans' strong showing in the 2004 election.

"The American people fear a whole range of things right now, from terrorism to their economic future," Solmonese said. "Our opposition has been pretty crafty at capitalizing on that fear, using whatever means necessary to make political gains."

Many conservative groups are now waging a two-pronged fight against gay marriage. They are lobbying Congress to approve a federal constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman; they also hope many more states will join the 17 that already have amended their constitutions to ban gay marriage.

The Human Rights Campaign was among numerous gay-rights organizations participating earlier this month in a strategy session aimed at competing effectively in upcoming state ballot campaigns regarding gay marriage.

Solmonese says he hopes Massachusetts will demonstrate to Americans nationwide that its pioneering legalization of same-sex marriage has positive, not negative, results. "Massachusetts is still there, with loving, committed families going on with their lives and experiencing the same rights and responsibilities that all Americans do," he said. "We want to shine a light on what happened in Massachusetts, and tell the American people who we truly are."

He replaces another Massachusetts political activist, former state Sen. Cheryl Jacques, who stepped down as HRC president late last year, citing differences with its board.

Her departure coincided with speculation in the gay media, and elsewhere, about discord among the HRC and some other major gay-rights groups. Solmonese said he has detected no serious rifts since his hiring was announced.

[From the Sun Chronicle, Mar. 18, 2005]

ATTLEBORO HONORED BY ANOTHER ACTIVIST

Attleboro is honored by the appointment of a city native to head the Human Rights Campaign—the nation's largest gay civil rights group—and just days prior to a welcome loosening on the West Coast of the bans on same-sex marriage.

Joe Solmonese, 40, who is gay, brings to his new role a history of activism that began when he became student council vice president while a junior at Attleboro High School in the early 1980s.

He later held an internship at the Statehouse while attending Boston University, then worked on successful reelection campaigns, first for Gov. Michael Dukakis and then U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Newton. He worked on a Senate campaign in Oregon, as well.

Solmonese succeeds former Sen. Cheryl Jacques, who stepped down from her Attleboro-area district to lead the Human Rights Campaign in January 2004. She resigned Nov. 30.

Solmonese, whose mother and sister live in Attleboro, took the helm just days before a trial court judge in California ruled on March 14 against that state's same-sex marriage ban, calling it unconstitutional and comparing it to archaic segregation laws.

It's a ruling that resonates in Massachusetts, which has been in the vanguard of the struggle for equality.

It was the first in the nation, in November 2003, to give gay men and lesbians the same access to marriage licenses as heterosexual couples.

Solmonese' predecessor, Jacques, married her longtime partner in August in Boston, days after she addressed the Democratic National Convention calling for "marriage equality." The couple were wed under Massachusetts' high court historic decision, a decision that was long overdue here and continues to be elsewhere.

Appeals are certain in California. But each step forward brings closer what surely will be the eventual right of gays and lesbians across the country to attain equal footing in the eyes of the law.

We congratulate Joe Solmonese, whose father, Joseph, was principal of Norton High School for several years until his death, as he sets out across the country to carry his message.

"We seek the same rights and responsibilities as all other Americans," Solmonese said, upon his appointment. "Our job is to educate the American people as to what equality means."

#### HONORING THE AMERICAN AIR POWER MUSEUM IN FARMINGDALE, NEW YORK

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale, New York to the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of American POWs at the end of World War II.

Sixty years ago this spring, over 100,000 American and Allied POWs were liberated by Soviet troops as they swept aside enemy forces in Eastern Europe. This liberation marked the end of forced marches, stinging cold, constant hunger and the everpresent threat of summary execution by a collapsing Nazi regime. Simultaneously, advancing Allied forces also discovered Hitler's death camps and their wretched legacy of inhumanity.

As we observe this anniversary, I am truly proud to have the American Airpower Museum at the Republic Airport in Farmingdale in my congressional district. The museum has established a new permanent tribute to honor those who endured the POW "stalags" and to solemnly mark the liberation of the death camps built by the Third Reich for the purpose of murdering millions of European Jews.

The museum's tribute includes a recreated watch tower and barracks, a detailed diorama of a German "stalag," the names of those New Yorkers who were POWs during World War II and a tribute to American POWs in other conflicts. This will mark the first permanent museum tribute to American POWs in the New York region.

It is vital that we continue to remember the horrors of the Holocaust and pay tribute to both the victims and the brave soldiers who contributed to the liberation of Europe from Nazi rule. I strongly commend the leadership that the American Airpower Museum of Farmingdale has taken on this issue and urge other museums to follow suit.

#### RECOGNIZING FLOWER MOUND HIGH SCHOOL'S NAMING TO THE GRAMMY SIGNATURE SCHOOL GOLD LIST

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Flower Mound High School, located in the 26th Congressional District of Texas, for its recognition on the Gold List of Grammy Signature Schools.

I congratulate Flower Mound High School's performing arts department, under the leadership of Danna Rothlisberger, Lewisville ISD director of performing arts, and Mark Rohwer, chair of the performing arts department, for their outstanding achievement. Flower Mound High School was only one of seven schools in the nation promoted to the Gold List from their original recognition as a Grammy Signature School.

Flower Mound High School received \$7,000 cash reward for its performing arts department as part of their promotion. Mr. Rohwer has promised to spend a portion of the money to hiring composers to write specific pieces for the band, orchestra and choir, and to buy new equipment.

Flower Mound High School's performing arts department is a stellar example from which Texas schools should model their performing arts departments. Their commitment to educating students through the arts is to be admired and replicated.

I am proud of the education system in Texas; especially our involved parents and teachers at Flower Mound High School who commit their lives and time to fostering growth in their students.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM "SLIM" SOMERVELL

**HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Willis "Slim" Somervell, who has dedicated his life to God, his family, and the United States of America.

Slim has said, "You need to be true to yourself and you need to have beliefs and a value system. Without those, what are we?" These

are wise words. As I learned about the life of service that Mr. Somervell has led, I am inspired by his beliefs and his values.

Service to America is one value Slim holds dear. He entered the United States Navy in 1941. In 1944, Slim was commissioned as a gunnery and navigation officer for the USS *Landing Ship Medium* 142.

In addition to having command of the *Landing Ship Medium*, he also commanded *Patrol Craft* 1262, which conducted air and sea rescues in the Caribbean. He was also Executive Officer of the *Patrol Craft Escort* 877.

Slim worked in the Fleet Weather Center in Washington, DC and conducted Navy weather research in Norfolk, Virginia. He served on the *Forrestal*, CVA-59. He was also the staff meteorologist for the commander of the U.S. Second Fleet, later for the Western Pacific 7th Fleet and ultimately commanded the Navy Research Facility in Norfolk, Virginia.

Devotion to family is another value that is important to Slim. While on assignment in Monterey, California, he met his wife Mary. They married in 1949 in Kerrville, Texas. They had five children, four girls and one boy. Slim and Mary are now grandparents of thirteen.

Slim will often tell you, "What more can a person ask for than children and grandchildren who turn out to be good citizens." As you can tell, Slim is quite proud of his family.

After 30 years of faithful service to our country, Slim retired. But this did not slow him down. Slim took a job with the Bureau of Reclamation in their cloud seeding program. Later, Slim worked for the Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University. Slim spent 15 years in that department as a manager, researcher and also a teacher.

In addition to service to family and service to our country, Slim also strongly believes in service to God. Slim and Mary attend Saint Joseph's Catholic Church in Fort Collins, Colorado. There, Slim serves as a lector and a communion minister.

Slim has been truly blessed with a great career and a great family. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Somervell. May God continue to bless the Somervells for years to come.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MAE CATHERINE GREENE

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2005*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Mae Catherine Greene in recognition for her dedication to her community.

Mae Catherine Greene fondly known as "Cat" by family and close friends is almost a life long resident of the east New York community of which she has been an integral and staunchly loyal advocate. She was born in Chadbourn, NC in March of 1957, the ninth of ten children of a proud and independent working mother.

Mae obtained her education in the neighborhood she so greatly loves and admires. She attended P.S. 149, I.S. 292 and William H. Maxwell High School in east New York. Mae, who has been married for almost 27 years to her childhood sweetheart, Richard Greene, is the proud mother of six children who still live in east New York as well.